NATURAL NEWS

The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

August 9, 1996

CENTER FOR EVOLUTIONARY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BIOLOGY

WETLANDS PROJECT INITIATED IN THAILAND

This summer a collaborative project was initiated with Prince of Songkhla University in southern Thailand by **Harold Voris** (Zoology), **Daryl Karns** (Research Associate, Zoology) and **Tanya Chanard** (Field Associate, Zoology, and 1995 ATP participant). The primary study site, Ban Tah Hin, is within a Thai Royal Forestry Department non-hunting area at the edge of Lake Songkhla, one of the largest brackish water lagoon lakes in Southeast Asia. Although this lake is well known for its importance to migratory waterfowl and its extensive fish fauna (over 80 species) we have found its snake fauna uniquely rich. Aquatic snake species representing three families occur within an area of less than one kilometer square, and we now have more than ten snakes prowling about the area broadcasting their every move as well as their body temperatures via tiny, surgically-implanted radios. This is the first study of its kind in the Old World tropics and we hope that our findings will help establish the uniqueness of this wetlands and contribute to its preservation.

PATTERSON APPOINTED TO PLANNING COMMISSION

Curator **Bruce Patterson** (Zoology/Mammals) has been appointed to the Strategic Planning Commission of the American Society of Mammalogists. The society is one of the nation's oldest active scientific organizations (it celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1994) and has 3,700 members worldwide. ASM has directed the eight-member commission to undertake a major reassessment of the society's organization (which now includes twenty-four standing committees and two ad hoc committees), its publications (including the Journal of Mammalogy, Mammalian Species, Special Publications series, and a variety of shorter articles), and its programs (including annual meetings domestically and international meetings approximately every other year). A primary goal of the strategy sessions will be to reorganize the ASM's structure, publications, and programming in ways that take maximum advantage of changes and trends in American science. The commission plan to focus particular attention on the expanding roles of interdisciplinary research, electronic publishing, and internet communications. And Bruce thought he was through with "Strategic Planning" for awhile...

FIELD MUSEUM MYCOLOGISTS ATTEND ANNUAL MEETING

The Field Museum was well represented by its mycologists at the 1996 Mycological Society of America/American Phytopathological Society's joint annual meeting in Indianapolis. The meetings took place July 27- 31. Associate Curator **Greg Mueller** (Botany) presented the paper, "Diversity and abundance of macromycetes in Cowles Bog, Indiana Dunes," Postdoctoral research associate **Jack Murphy** (Botany) presented, "Higher fungi of the Chicago region in the 20th century," and graduate student **John Paul Schmit** (University of Chicago, Botany) presented, "Effects of nutrient density on competition between fungal decomposers." Research **Associate Sabine Huhndorf** (Botany) presented a poster titled "Spatial and temporal patterns and host specificity among some wood-inhabiting ascomycetes at El Verde Research Area, Puerto Rico." Duur Aanen presented a poster titled "Not every Hebeloma is Hebeloma crustiliniforme;" Duur is a graduate student visiting the Field Museum from Wageningen Agricultural University in The Netherlands. Also attending the meetings from the Field Museum were Associate **Betty Strack** (Botany), Collections Manager **Quixin Wu** (Botany), postdoctoral research associate **Fernando Fernandez** (Botany), graduate student and Field Museum intern **Aleksa Kosinski** (University of Illinois at Chicago), graduate student **Juan Luis Mata** (University of Costa Rica, San Jose), and Botany volunteer **Elizabeth Farwell**.

CENTER FOR CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND CHANGE

The Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC) is facilitating a special public event during the Democratic Convention, August 27, 2:30 - 5:00 p.m., at The Field Museum, James Simpson Theatre. The event is "An Honest Conversation about Race," with confirmed participation from Senator Bill Bradley, Sandra Cisneros, Jack Kemp, Bharati Mukerjee, Cornel West, and David Wong. CCUC has reserved twenty seats for Field Museum staff who would like to attend this event. Call **Jaci Carter** at ext. 217 for information, and to reserve your seat.

Project Administrator **Jaci Carter** and CCUC Director **Alaka Wali** (both CCUC) attended the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Project Directors for the NEH special initiative - "A National Conversation on Pluralism and Identity in America." Jaci was leader of a key session, which was attended by Sheldon Hackney, Chairman of NEH.

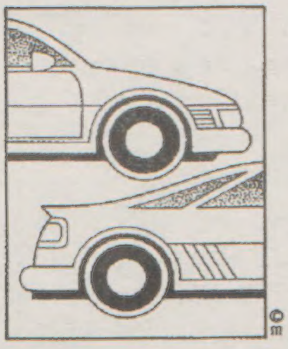
CCUC is pleased to collaborate with the University of Illinois at Chicago Great Cities Program through the sponsorship of an exchange student intern from Mexico City. Maria Eugenia Bernal Reyes, who has an advanced degree in graphic design, is working on research comparing the Chicago/Mexico City urban development for the *Living Together* Project and on the design of the Nuveen Forum brochure.

We extend our deepest sympathies to **Mrs. Elsie Guy** on the loss of her sister, Mrs. Anetta Dickerson, on Sunday morning, August 4.

GOING YOUR WAY ...

CTA (Chicago Transit Authority) and RTA (Regional Transit Authority) maps are now posted in two new cases outside of the Personnel Office. The CTA map includes information on the bus and elevated/subway train system for the Chicagoland area. The RTA map includes information on getting around northeastern Illinois and includes the six counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will. Both maps include fare information. Each map will be replaced as a new one is published. We hope you find the posting of these maps helpful.

-- Jennifer Noe



HAD WE BUT KNOWN ...

Yes, we would have warned you of the Tuesday swearing-in ceremony at Soldier Field which caused a massive traffic jam. But the event planners did not notify the Museum. In fact, it seems that other city agencies did not know what was happening either, as several cement trucks headed for the Lake Shore Drive construction project were also delayed for hours, wasting both time and cement.

Another similar ceremony is scheduled for September 10. According to news reports the Mayor is encouraging the Immigration Service to split it into several smaller meetings but alternative plans have not yet been announced. As we learn more, we will keep you posted.

BRING YOUR TOTES

Bring your full -- or partially full -- recycling totes down to the shipping dock on Wednesday afternoon. An empty tote will be left on Thursday morning for every full tote picked up. If your tote is only partially full, you can bring it down to the shipping dock and combine its contents with another partially full tote so that you don't have to wait another week to empty yours.

The Museum is able to bail up the boxes for recycling, but please break down your cardboard boxes before putting them out for trash. The guys on the shipping dock are doing their bit for recycling, so let's help them out by doing our part. Thanks.

THE VOLUNTEER SPECTATOR

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

This past July marked my twelfth year at The Field Museum. I have heard it said that the best part of the Museum is the people, and with the prospect of leaving, I feel it all the more.

On August 26 I will begin the position of Annual Giving Director at Rosary College, my alma mater. The Office of Institutional Advancement thinks it would be a plus to have an alum on their development team when soliciting gifts from Rosary alumni. My last day at The Field Museum is Friday, August 16.

I have fond memories of The Field Museum, beginning in 1984 in the Development Office with Vice President **Tom Sanders,** then in Zoology with Chairs **John Fitzpatrick, Robert Inger** and **Scott Lanyon,** and then in Volunteer Services with Chair of Education, **Carolyn Blackmon.** While learning how a natural history museum works, I have met many wonderful people-- many of whom are dear friends. It isn't anyone I would have left The Field Museum for, but Rosary is very special to me.

I will miss you. Thanks for everything.

Anita Morgan

PAWNEE POWWOW

Mary Ann Bloom and six Education Department Earth Lodge volunteers went to the Pawnee Powwow in Oklahoma. They renewed friendships and built new ones while visiting with the Pawnee. A photo album of the Pawnee Powwow and local sites will be kept in the Pawnee Earth Lodge to show visitors.

The *Natural News* is edited by **Carolyn Klyce** in the President's Office. The deadline for all submissions -- in WordPerfect on floppy disk or via email to klyce@fmppr.fmnh.org -- is Tuesday at noon. Printed on recycled paper.